

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

December 17, 1981

POLAND: Strikes Declining

The number of strikes apparently has declined, but the situation remains volatile as some workers and students seek other methods to show their opposition to martial law. [REDACTED]

Solidarity and regime sources agree that there are about 50 strikes now under way, compared with as many as 200 on Monday. [REDACTED]

Security forces ended the strike at a major steel plant near Krakow early yesterday morning, and [REDACTED] police beat up some of the strikers. According to press accounts, the regime yesterday successfully reoccupied the Lenin shipyards. [REDACTED]

Workers and students may temporarily turn to other forms of protest. Demonstrations scheduled for today in both Warsaw and Krakow could bring the participants into confrontation with the security services. Solidarity activists also are trying to organize passive resistance. They have called for all Poles to remain indoors for one hour this evening to protest imposition of martial law. Some workers also have slowed down the pace of their work. [REDACTED]

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If the strikes continue to decrease, there will be mounting pressure on the regime to release people who have been detained. A high-level Central Committee official told [redacted] yesterday that about 9,000 people have been detained since the imposition of martial law. [redacted]

Church leaders yesterday released a sharply worded statement accusing the regime of "terrorizing" the nation by military force. They emphasized that the process of reforms begun 16 months ago cannot be abandoned, and they dedicated the Church to the defense of Solidarity and to winning the release of those held by the government. The Church's statement, which will not become generally known until Sunday, will encourage passive resistance. [redacted]

Soviet Reactions

Soviet commentary on the internal situation in Poland generally has been low key. Recent press reports acknowledge that strikes have occurred but note an "improved situation" in most regions. In an apparent warning to the Polish populace, a Soviet official told a Western correspondent that Moscow would provide military assistance if Premier Jaruzelski requested it. [redacted]

Moscow continues to allege US interference in Polish affairs. TASS yesterday criticized statements by Secretary of State Haig and the White House calling for a "compromise" settlement and earlier called the suspension of US food credits blackmail aimed at imposing "imperialist terms" upon Poland. The USSR also has charged Washington with promoting an "atmosphere of anarchy" and attacked the US decision to increase the number of Voice of America broadcasts in Poland. [redacted]

East European leaders gathering in Moscow for Chairman Brezhnev's 75th birthday on Saturday--Hungarian First Secretary Kadar is already en route--will probably discuss the Polish situation. A communique endorsing Polish actions might emerge, although no formal Warsaw Pact meeting is scheduled. Even Romanian President Ceausescu will attend; it is unclear whether a Polish representative will be present. [redacted]

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There continues to be no evidence of preparations by Soviet combat forces to intervene in Poland.

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Debt Problems

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Despite Moscow's vague offer to provide assistance, there is still no evidence of hard currency aid to help cover interest. Poland's failure to pay interest virtually assures that the rescheduling agreement cannot be signed as scheduled on 28 December. As a result, banks will be under more pressure to write off Polish loans, and the risk of a declaration of default increases.

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~~Top Secret~~